

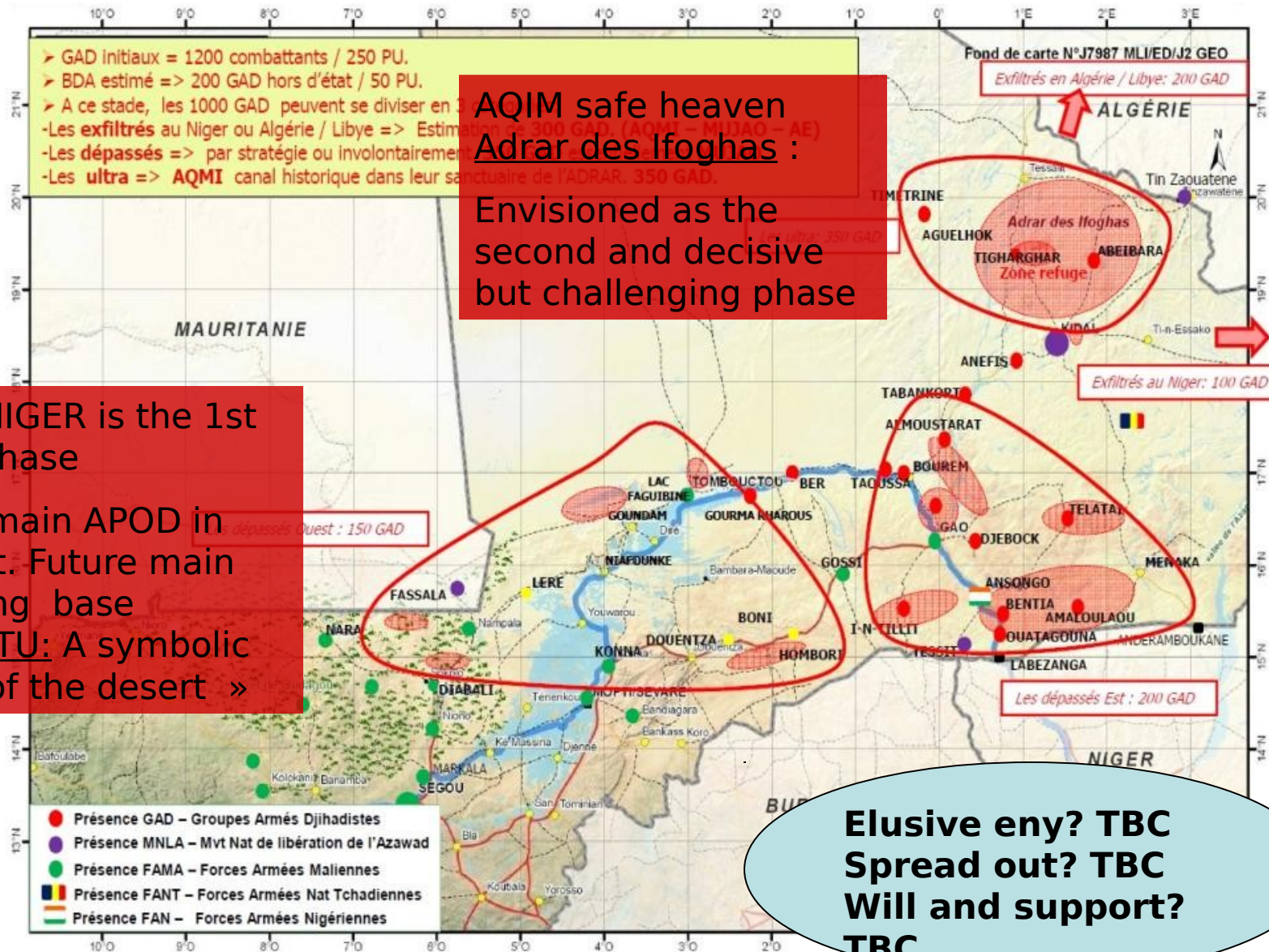


Airborne Operations

SERVAL-MALI

Lieutenant-colonel Sébastien Chênebeau
French Liaison Officer Joint Staff J7







JANUARY 2013 : FRENCH FORCES LAY-OUT

SEVERAL ONGOING OPS
SF PRESENCE IN THE SUB-REGION
EMERGING CRISIS IN CENTRAL AFRICA



HQ FOR
COOPERATION

SENEGAL



MPA



IVOIRY COAS



CHAD



DJIBOUTI



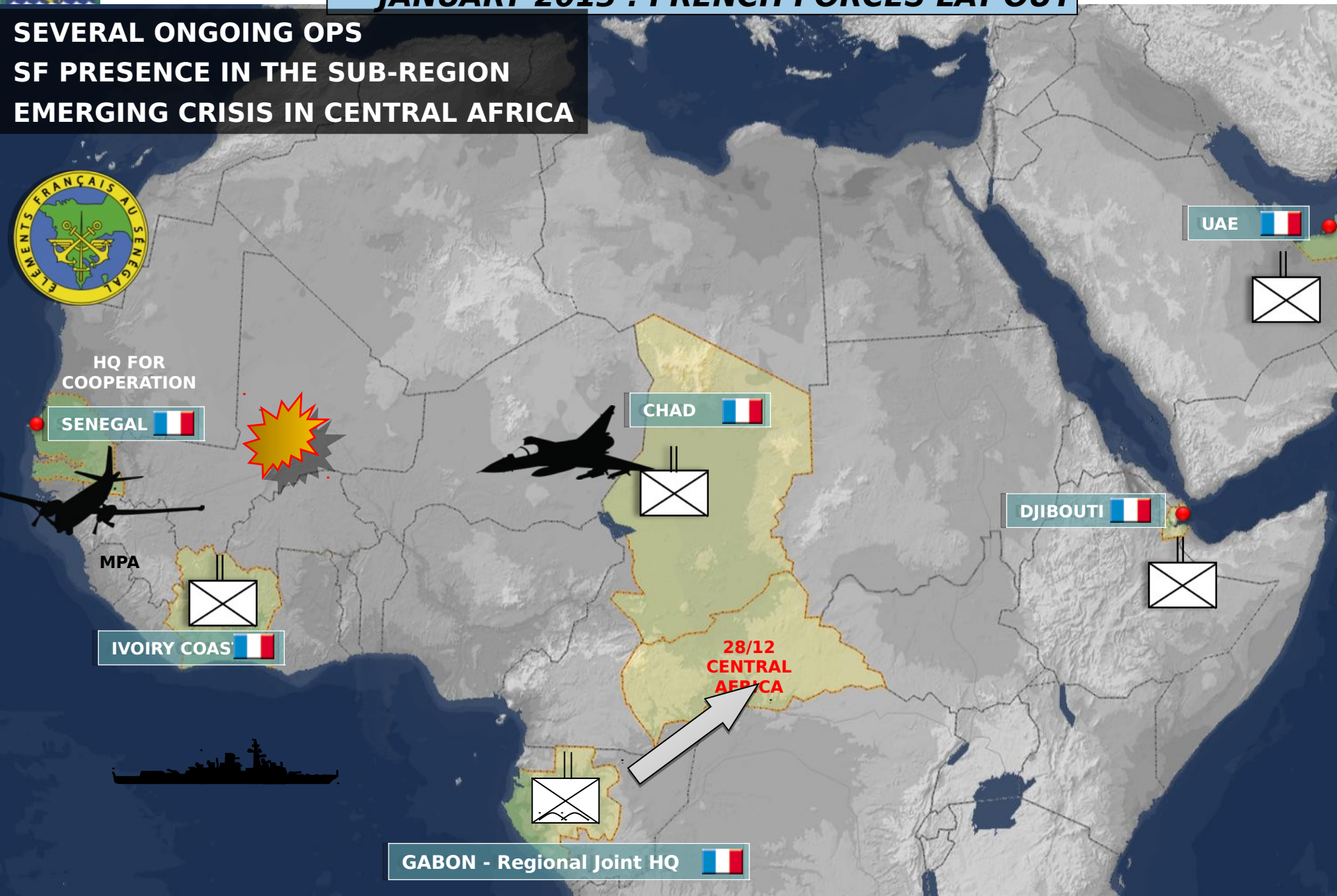
UAE



28/12
CENTRAL
AFRICA



GABON - Regional Joint HQ





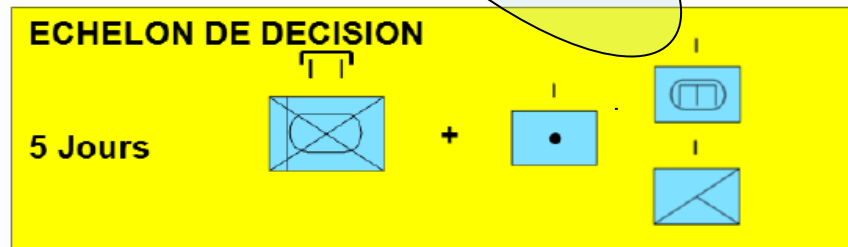
Guépard alert system

**EMERGENCY
ECHELON**
12-72 hrs



**Permanent
AIRBORNE QRF
NTM 12h-72h**

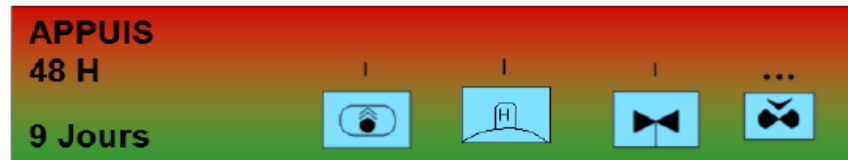
**DECISIVE
ECHELON**
5 days



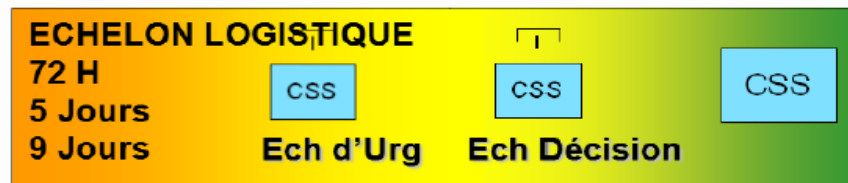
**HQ
ECHELON**
3 to 5 days



**COMBAT SUPPORT
ECHELON**
2 to 9 days



**CSS
ECHELON**
3 to 9 days





AIRBORNE TF MISSION and TASKS

Features of the OP: very short notice, distances, degraded infrastructure (roads and airfields), need for velocity and ubiquity,...

⇒ **An Airborne TF was mandatory and included in the LCC Task Org in Phase 0.**

The permanent FRA QRF (Guépard) made it possible

While permanently maintaining a theater airborne reserve (1)

(2) Participate in the capture of the area S/River NIGER and beyond :

- Jan 26: By Air assault, seize and secure GAO APOD.
- Jan 27: After airborne operation, participate in the seizure of TBU

- Feb: extend the controlled area North and reach AQIM safe



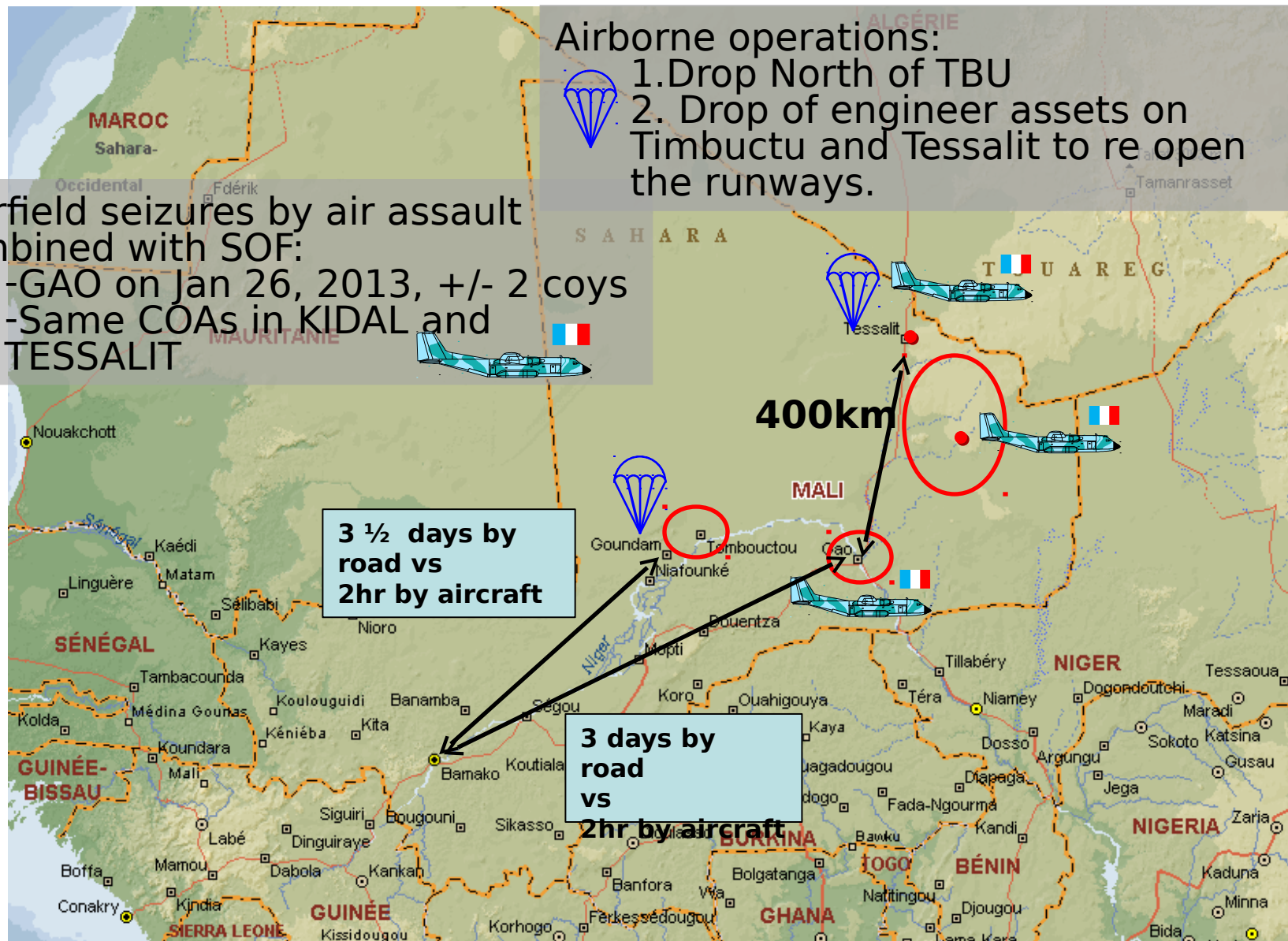
- Airfield seizures by air assault combined with SOF:

- GAO on Jan 26, 2013, +/- 2 coys
- Same COAs in KIDAL and TESSALIT

Airborne operations:



1. Drop North of TBU
2. Drop of engineer assets on Timbuctu and Tessalit to re open the runways.





Op LEOPARD

Jump over TIMBUCTU

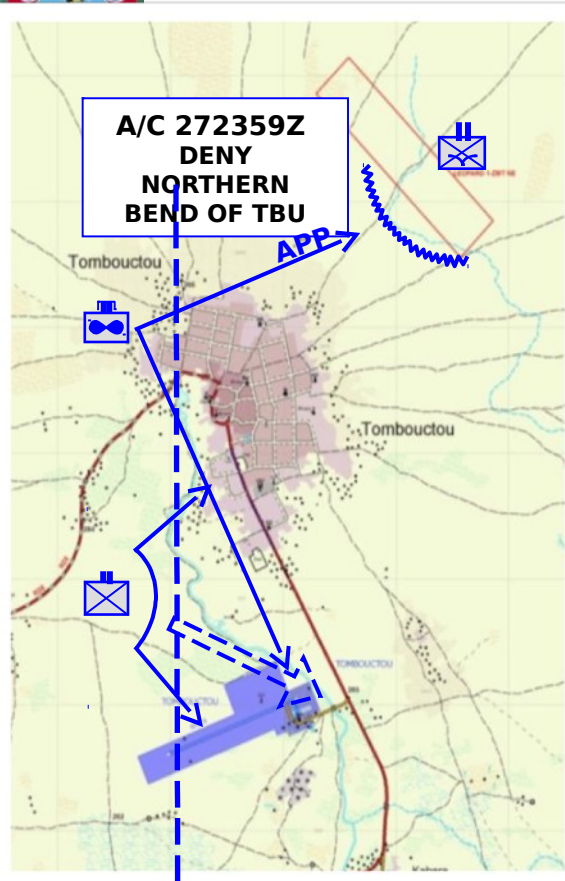




Preparation

OP LEOPARD

- Initial planning on objective GAO but several changes on the objectives.
- TF HQ Colocated and integrated with Airlitf TF HQ
- TF Rearticulation prior the drop because of number of aircrafts
- Eny intents unknown



combination ground
air assault.

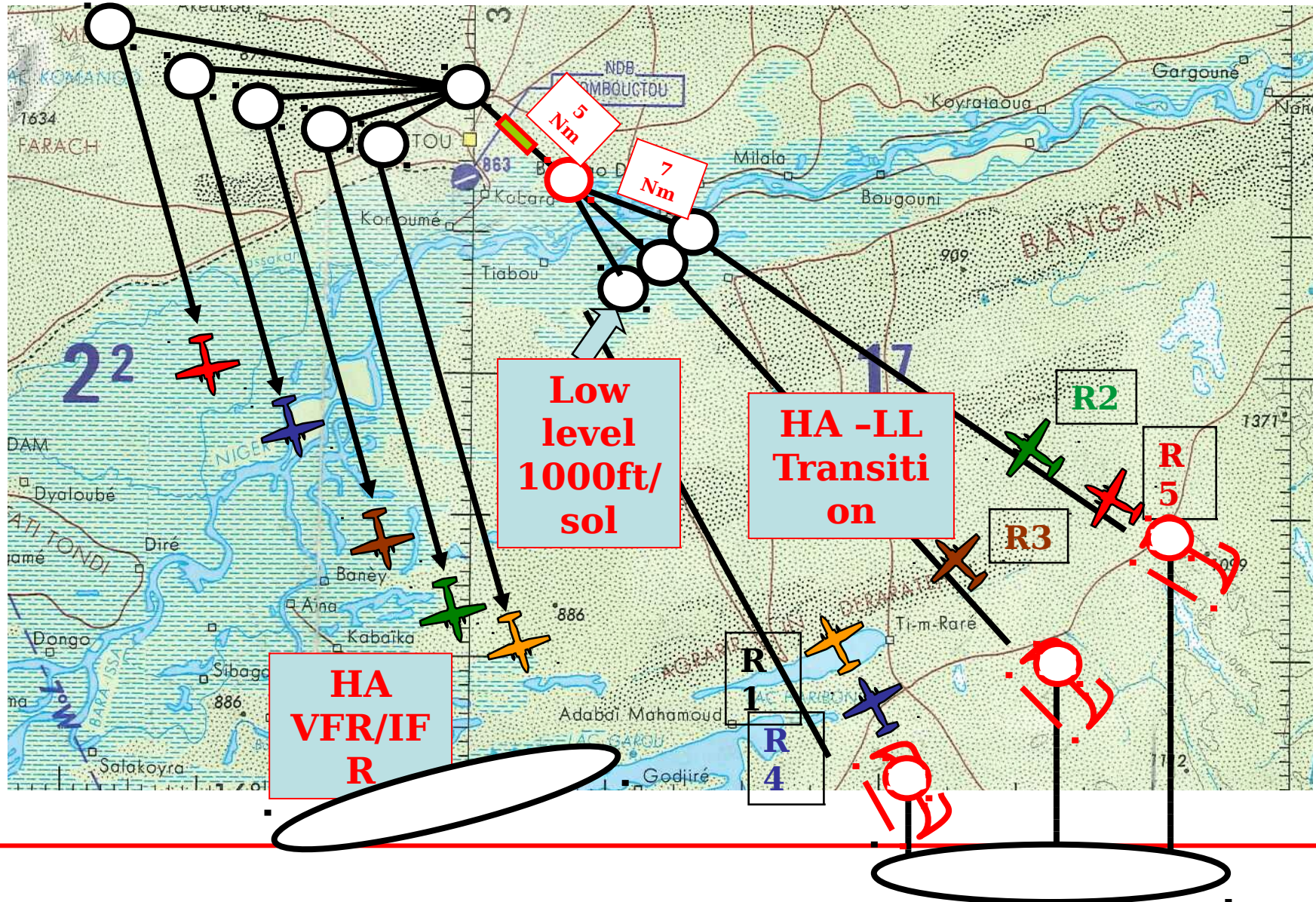
The jump

- 7hrs on board, 5 C130/C160, 300m, at night.
- 13 airdrop bundles (AT missiles, machine guns).
- 1 single stick, no marking (using GPS).





A complex Air Op





Conduct of operation



OP LEOPARD 1

- Regroupment on assembly area in 2hrs in 3 initial points.
- Seizure of initial objectives on time.
- Exploitation within 24hrs, liaison with Malian AF.
- Seizure of TBU on time. No major incidents.
- Coordination with infantry battalion

Key element : Engineer echelon.



**Reason for success :
drills, well rehearsed
SOP's.**





Lessons learned : Airborne OPS

- Strategic planning and paralell planning ;
 - “who dares wins” : concept high altitude / steep descent/ low level / high altitude (night mission)/ Drop without markings/ at night etc ;
 - Strenght ratio mitigated by Air Support ;
 - Close coordination with air force and air delivery in each steps of the operation ;
 - Flexibility and efficiency: “airborne troops spirit” ;
 - Air assault and Airborne Ops must be executed by well trained specialists.
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Focus on runways re-opening assets

- Drop of engineer squad and assets on Tombouctou and Tessalit to repair the runway.
 - Re-opening of the runways in less than 24hrs in both cases
 - Allows the reinforcement and the logistics to come in
 - **Small team and old fashion assets but big impact**
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